

# STORY BOOKS AS OUTCOMES FROM FIELD METHODS CLASSES:

P'urhépecha, Sà'án Sàvĩ ñà Yukúnanĩ and Dille' Xhunh Laxup

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1 – University of California, Santa Barbara

2 – Mixteco Indígena Community Organizing Project

3 – Senderos

4 – University of California, Santa Cruz



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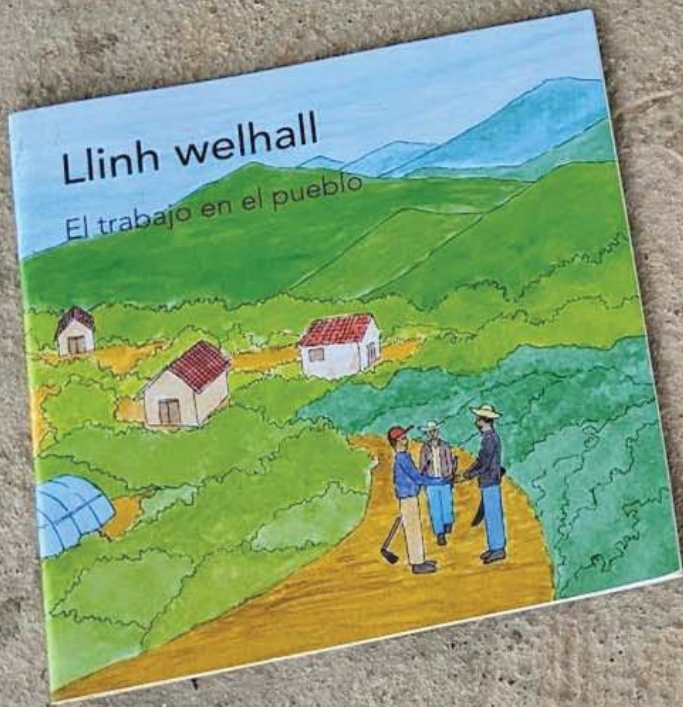
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# Creating books

- Different approaches, similar outcomes
- Sources
  - Existing materials
    - Archives
    - Pedagogical materials (flash cards, games, posters...)
  - New stories
- Accessible format
- Tangible product
- Language in cultural context
- Audience/purpose
  - Speakers
  - Learners



# Dille' Xhunh Laxup (Santiago Laxopa Zapotec)



# Background

- Ongoing relationship: UCSC linguistics & local diaspora community
  - Field methods/research
  - Senderos/Nido de lenguas
    - Camps, classes, pop-ups
- Field methods class producing materials for local community work
  - [Dictionary](#)
  - Lesson plans for classes
    - Language lessons plus cultural/community content



# Background

- Ongoing relationship with language community in Santiago Laxopa
  - UCSC grad students and faculty traveling to Oaxaca
  - Need for community projects *in Laxopa*
    - Reading and writing Zapotec
- Children
  - School (recently) Spanish-only
  - Most children do not feel comfortable speaking SLZ
- Books as part of reading/writing workshops
  - Start with a few examples

# First attempt at storybooks

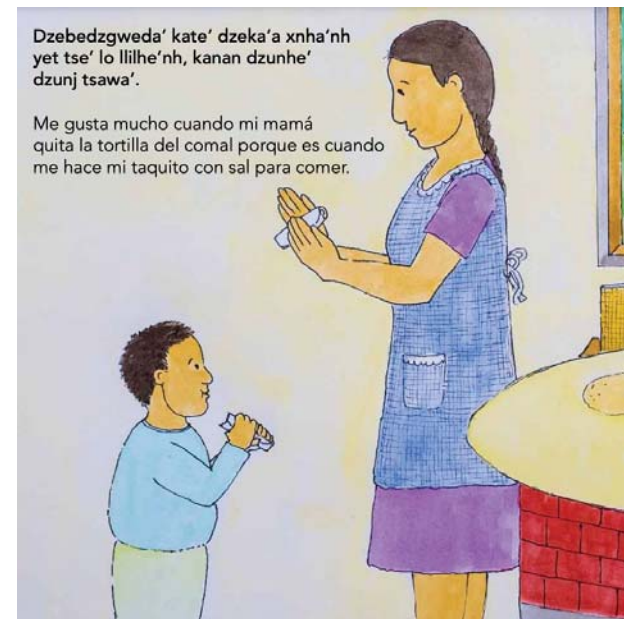
Three books:

- Alphabet
  - Based on alphabet poster
  - Gak tsujdzu xtille'dzu (Como escribimos nuestra lengua)
- Numbers (and animals)
  - Based on vocab cards
  - Elhabdzu bi'a yixe' (Contando animales)
  - Animals found around Laxopa
- A story/narrative
  - Laxopa culture/day-to-day life
  - More narrative style



# Author experience: Raul Díaz Robles

- Learned Spanish at 5 years old
- Spoke only Zapotec
  - At home
  - In the town band
  - At work - This is what is described in our first storybook
- Many children today don't have this experience
  - Books are a tool parents can use to continue transmitting their language to their children



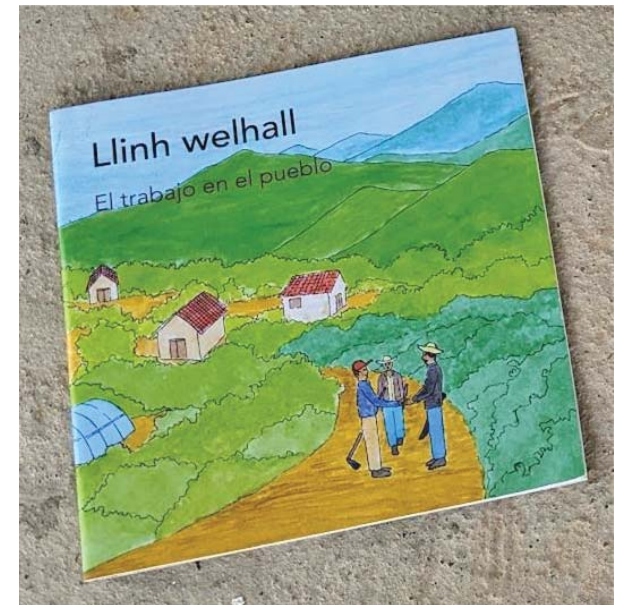


# First attempt: Collaboration

- Raul Díaz Robles
  - Ideas
  - Narrative
  - Translation
- Fe Silva Robles
  - Ideas
  - Translation
- UCSC grad students, faculty
- NSF grant (#2019804)
- Oaxacan illustrator [Roque Reyes](#)

# Linh welhall - El trabajo en el pueblo

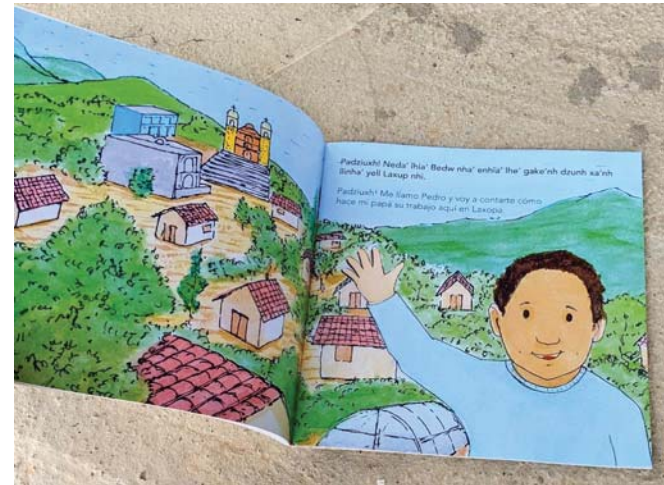
- Process
  - Casual discussion/interview with Raul and grad students
    - Brainstorm ideas, learn about life in Laxopa
      - Avoid potentially controversial topics (Ex: Día de muertos)
  - Decisions
    - Each page roughly 1-2 sentences
    - 10-15 sentences tops
    - POV child in Laxopa, talking about parents' work



# Llinh welhall - El trabajo en el pueblo

- Process

- Grad student drafts potential sentences in Spanish
  - Way off, but good starting place
- Raul makes many corrections, explains the process in Spanish
- Raul narrates a draft in Zapotec
  - Translation into Spanish
  - Edits
- Illustrations (Roque Reyes)
  - Culturally appropriate
  - Locationally/Spatially grounded, depicting the town of Laxopa itself



# Publishing physical books

- Books were put together with Adobe InDesign
  - Allows for high quality printing options
  - User-friendly app with lots of tutorials online for beginners
- Choices in book size, fonts, and colors were intentional
  - 8.5 x 8.5 books are a popular choice for picture books
  - Dark grey/black font placed on pages for optimal legibility
- Printed with a local printing press
  - Things to consider for printing: paper type, book binding, etc.
  - Local printers are usually able to undertake smaller-size projects





Reading and writing workshop in 2022 in Santiago Laxopa



# Challenges

- Writing a story from scratch
- Is this something that people will like/find useful?
- Orthography
  - Tone
    - Not currently orthographically represented for SLZ
    - Decision point: Intended audience/purpose

# Future directions

- Need to see how community responds
  - Desire for more books?
  - Desire to write books?
  - Orthography suggestions/changes?
  - Topics?
    - Barrios of Laxopa
    - Archie the dog
- Books available online (creative commons license)
  - <https://zapotec.ucsc.edu/resources/books.html>
- Illustrations available to use/share
  - <https://zapotec.ucsc.edu/illustrations.html>



# Ka'vi Sà'án Sàvĩ - Arhintani P'urhé jimbó

KA'VI SÀ'ÁN SÀVĨ - LEE EN MIXTECO - READ IN MIXTEC

Sà'án Sàvĩ ñà Yukúnani



NÜÜ TSÁCHUUN-NÀ TSÀ'VÌ

Donde usan el parangón

Where they use the parangón

Hablado por: Jeremías Salazar

KA'VI SÀ'ÁN SÀVĨ

NTSÀTSÍ NTIVÄ'Û CHÜÜN

## NTSÀTSÍ NTIVÄ'Û CHÜÜN

El coyote se comió las gallinas

The coyote ate the hens



Jeremías Salazar

ARHINTANI P'URHÉ JIMBÓ

LECTURA EN P'URHÉPECHA

READ IN P'URHÉPECHA

P'urhépecha K'umajchuni anapu



TATÁ K'ERI KA MEREMEREJKUTI

El gran abuelo y la luz brillante

The old man and the shining light

Hablado por: Martín Gabriel Ruiz



Hablado por Jeremías Salazar 2020, grabado por Alonso Vázquez-Aguilar y diseñado por Guillen Belmar Viseras y Eric W. Campbell

UCSB  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
SANTA BARBARA



Hablado por Martín Gabriel Ruiz Jan 20 2022, Grabado por Eric W. Campbell y diseñado por Guillen Belmar, Chun-Jan Young y Eric W. Campbell



# Storybooks as part of language work

- Corpus of *language use*, discourse (from various language users, genres)
- This takes hours... and days ... and weeks
- Often end up partly transcribed and translated, maybe in an archive
  - Limited accessibility
  - Difficult to use
- Making a static, presentational, accessible, printable/playable outcome
  - Serves for language appreciation, pedagogy, and visibility
  - Can be included in an archival deposit, and/or on a Project web page
  - Takes relatively little time
- Mobilizing institutional resources for more practical outcomes from field methods and other community-based language work (Campbell et al. 2021)

# Why storybooks?

P'urhépecha K'umajchuni anapu



- Teaching culture, not just language
  - Transmitting community knowledge and values
- Encouraging family language transmission
  - Materials parents can use to interact with their kids in the language
- Facilitates language learning in a contextualized environment

TATÁ K'ERI KA MEREMEREJKUTI

El gran abuelo y la luz brillante

The old man and the shining light

Hablado por: Martín Gabriel Ruiz

UARHIETI KA AKUITSI

Jo, ji nirashinga enguntani uandantskua ma. Indé jiní anapusti K'umajchun. Indé sani enguntashempti juchari náná k'ericha. Jarashptinha ma vuelta japka ma uarhieti, ka imanha sapí ma kamshempti, ka imanha sapí t'irieshempti itsukuanha intskushempti t'irierani imeri itsukuachka. Ka imanha, ishku undani tataka sapichu k'arhishintani notaru uni k'uiripini. Nonha ushempti k'uiripini.





# Why storybooks?

- Sharing books online
  - Archives, project websites...
- But need for funds to print more books
  - Not everyone has constant access to Internet
- Possibility of audiobooks:
  - It may encourage Indigenous parents to learn the language with their children!

Cha iká kúu nùù nikitsàa-kuê. Cha ntsio-kuê saán kuâà ùni tá yòö, ùvi á ùni yòö kúu ñàà ntsio-kuê sana nikitsáá ñàà ntsà'an-kuê skuélà. Cha tá ntsà'an-yù skuélà ra, ntsitsa luu luu ntsio ri ñàà meé soo inglés ká'an-nà. Cha meé ra ñàà kuê ní, kuê niñà'a soo-ni kuê nítsitú nini-yù, ká'an-yù luu luu kuâà ùvi á ùni táni tù'un ñàà Sà'an Xchílà. Cha ñàà inglés-ka ra kuê nítsitú, táná kuê nítsitú nini-yù, niñà'a soo ntsini-yù ra ñàà...



Sà'an Sávĩ ñà Yukúnanĩ



LÓCHÍ TSI NTIKÚ'NTÚ (1)

El zopilote y el flojo (1)

The vulture and the lazy man (1)

Hablado por: Jeremías Salazar

Scan this to donate to the Sà'an Sávĩ ñà Yukúnanĩ funds:



# Spelling?

Ñaa ku ntakani iin kuentu ñaa tana  
ntakani-na nuu. Ntaka'an va'a a ñaa a  
patsa'nu a tatsa'nu mee-ra nto'o saan.

Ñàà kú ntàkanì iin kuéntù ñàà táná  
ntákani-nà nùù. Ntaká'an và'à á ñàà á  
pátsá'nù á tátsá'nu meé-rà ntò'o saán.

- Choice of orthography / Spelling decisions:
  - People have very strong opinions about spelling, and one may be afraid of releasing written content in the language and open themselves to criticism for their spelling choices
  - But! Orthographies can change, and so can our choices with further community feedback!
    - i.e., Mixtec: Should we represent the tone?
      - We offered community members versions where the tone was represented with diacritics and other version without the tone representation
      - Younger generations and learners need the representations of the tone to read, but more confident speakers can usually get away without that
      - But why choose one or the other? Why not both?
        - In Arabic and Hebrew you normally don't write the vowels, but you can if you need to. Same with the tones!

# It's challenging

- It's not always easy to know what to keep and what to discard
- Sometimes we were wondering how much written Spanish models were affecting the way in which we were “polishing off” the transcription to turn them into written stories
- This process of “polishing” led us to a whole project for Sà'án Sàvǐ ñà Yukúnani that allowed us to explore an extremely common discourse marker homophonous with some subordinators (Belmar & Salazar, submitted for publication).
- It only highlighted the need to understand what we could have easily brushed off as disfluencies, but is indeed a language-specific strategy of combining information in spontaneous speech

# Ká'vi Sà'án Sàvĩ Project

- Funding from the Foundation for Endangered Languages (small grants)
- 6 stories adapted from fieldwork recordings
- Indigenous self-representation:
  - Stories told from an Indigenous perspective
    - Mixtec culture and worldview
    - Mixtec experience in the diaspora in California



# Ká'vi Sà'án Sàvĩ Project

- Indigenous illustrators hired to design the visual art that will accompany the stories
- Different styles of visual art:
  - prioritizing the illustrators' self-expression



KAVI SÀ'ÁN SÀVĨ

NTSÀTSÍ NTIVÁÚ CHÜÜN

Cha ñàà tíí kuáchi-kue-ì ra  
;sàna xìnĩ-à ñàà ntakasì-à  
chüŭn!



Pero eran pequeños... ¡y se les olvidó  
encerrar a las gallinas!

But they were little, and they forgot to lock the  
hens!





¡Duxklhenhu' lhe'!

¡Kanikua miemukua!

¡Tá tsà'vĩ-kue-ní!

